

# DAILY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 17, 2005

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## WTO DEAL IN 2006 TOUGH BUT POSSIBLE, U.S. TRADE OFFICIAL SAYS

Allgeier expresses some confidence following meetings in Geneva

A senior U.S. trade official says he is somewhat confident that the 148 member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) can conclude negotiations on a new global trade agreement by the end of 2006.

Peter Allgeier, deputy U.S. trade representative, made the comment at a February 16 briefing in Geneva at the end of a two-day WTO General Council meeting, which followed a meeting of the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC), the group that oversees the negotiations.

"It is a big challenge to do it, but I certainly think that it is possible," Allgeier said, "and I must say that at least the attitudes that people have at this point give me a degree of confidence."

The negotiations, launched in 2001 and formally called the Doha Development Agenda (DDA), languished for years, stalled over difficult agricultural trade issues, until achievement of a breakthrough agreement at the July 2004 General Council meeting on a framework for continuing work.

Allgeier outlined a number of milestones that would indicate whether the negotiations can conclude in 2006 with an agreement.

A number of informal meetings of trade ministers are scheduled through July, starting off with a meeting in Kenya March 2-3. By the time of the July meeting of the General Council, Allgeier said, the negotiators will have to achieve what he is calling a "first approximation." By the time of the WTO Hong Kong ministers' meeting in December, he said, the parties will have to produce what he is calling an "end game document" for finishing the negotiations over the following year.

Allgeier said he could not yet describe what either the July first approximation or the December end game document would look like.

In the United States, he said, two issues approaching for Congress could influence the WTO negotiations. First, and unlikely to happen, Congress could refuse to extend trade promotion authority (TPA), otherwise known as fast track, from mid-2005 through mid-2007 as President Bush is expected to request. Republican trade leaders in Congress have indicated they would likely not even let this issue advance beyond the committee stage. Under TPA, Congress restricts itself only to approve or reject a negotiated trade agreement, within strict time limits and without amendments.

Second, congressional opponents of the WTO have an opportunity, available only once every five years by law, to vote on withdrawing U.S. membership in the organization. Allgeier expressed confidence that the Bush administration would successfully defend continued U.S. participation in the WTO. Even if Congress were to pass a withdrawal resolution, he said, the House of Representatives and Senate would have to override a likely veto by President Bush with a two-thirds vote.

Allgeier criticized legislation proposed in the House that would repeal most-favored-nation status, otherwise known as normal trade relations, for China.

In the wide-ranging briefing Allgeier made comments on a number of other issues, including the WTO agricultural and services negotiations, the status of WTO accession for a number of countries, and intellectual property protection in Brazil and China.

The full transcript and the audio file of Ambassador Allgeier press conference are available in the U.S. Mission homepage: [www.usmission.ch](http://www.usmission.ch)

## BUSH TO STRESS U.S.-EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP DURING UPCOMING VISIT

President's itinerary includes stops in Belgium, Germany, Slovak Republic

By Tim Receveur  
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- President Bush will use his first international trip of his second term to reach out to European leaders and institutions in support of a common agenda based on shared values and the shared goals of strengthening freedom, democracy and security throughout the world.

After his re-election November 2, 2004, Bush announced his desire to visit Europe soon after his inauguration to deepen transatlantic cooperation. He will travel to Belgium, Germany and the Slovak Republic February 21-24.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, during her recent visit to Europe and the Middle East, said that President Bush will "continue the conversation when he arrives in Europe February 21st" about "how America and Europe can use the power of our partnership to advance our ideals worldwide."

Rice said that everyone to whom she spoke during her trip was ready to start a "new chapter" after the disagreements over Iraq. "Everywhere, people were talking about the way forward. There really wasn't much discussion of what we've been through and [there was] really an acknowledgement that we've got a big agenda ahead of us," Rice said.

That agenda includes issues beyond the transatlantic community such as reform in the Middle East, moving the Israeli-Palestinian issue forward, providing support for Afghanistan, dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions and supporting a stable and democratic Iraq, Rice said.

She pointed out that there has been continuing U.S.-European cooperation on issues ranging from the War on Terrorism and security issues such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, "all the way out to issues of poverty alleviation and development, and fighting the scourge of AIDS."

Rice said that even on Iraq, the United States and Europe understand each other. "We now do have a common agenda," she said, "and that is that we are facing the fact

of an Iraqi people who are taking risks of their own for their democratic future.”

She said she believed the president, during his trip, “will find a very constructive, warm atmosphere, an atmosphere in which everyone is ready to look well beyond any disagreements that we may have had in the past to our common future.”

European Union (EU) foreign policy chief Javier Solana, in a February 15 interview with the Associated Press, said he believes both sides have moved past the divisions over Iraq.

“We are overcoming a period ... linked to Iraq that has had some tension between the Europeans and Americans,” Solana said. “This is over. What we have to do is look to the future.”

President Bush is scheduled to arrive in Brussels, Belgium, on Monday, February 21, where he will host a working dinner for French President Jacques Chirac.

On Tuesday, February 22, Bush will meet with the allied heads of state and government at NATO headquarters.

That same day he will attend the European Council -- the first U.S. president to do so -- where he will meet with the heads of government of all 25 EU members. Bush will also meet with the EU presidency and the European Commission and will meet bilaterally with his Belgian hosts.

On Wednesday, February 23, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder will host President Bush in Mainz, Germany.

The next day Bush will participate in a bilateral program with leaders of the Slovak Republic in Bratislava. There he will also meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

One issue expected to come up during Bush’s trip, particularly during his meetings at the European Union, is the possible lifting of the EU arms embargo on China, which the United States has said would send the “wrong signal” to China about human rights and could also have a negative impact on Asian regional stability.

## RICE SETS OUT ADMINISTRATION’S FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUDGET PRIORITIES

Seeking to create a balance of power that favors freedom, secretary says

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice used President Bush’s \$33.6 billion funding request for various international affairs programs in fiscal year 2006 to give senators an overview of the administration’s foreign policy priorities.

Encouraging political pluralism, economic openness and the growth of civil society throughout the broader Middle East, North Africa, and other majority-Muslim countries is a critical challenge, Rice told members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee during fiscal year 2006 budget hearings February 16.

To advance that mission, the president is seeking increased funding for diplomatic and assistance activities in the region, including \$120 million for the Middle East Partnership Initiative, \$40 million for the National Endowment for Democracy, and \$180 million for outreach to Muslim populations through educational and cultural exchanges and other public diplomacy efforts, the secretary said.

Nearly \$1.1 billion has been requested for investment in Afghanistan’s health, education, water and free market infrastructures, she added, and \$360 million to continue assistance to the Iraqi government in delivering basic services, generating jobs, developing a justice system and creating a functioning democracy.

The Palestinians would receive \$150 million to build their infrastructure and sustain reforms.

The president has asked Congress to supply additional funds for many of these same programs in 2005 through a 2005 supplemental budget request that totals another \$6.3 billion. Within this budget, another \$200 million is allocated for the Palestinians and \$2 billion for Afghanistan.

Rice said the United States is determined to alleviate poverty and bolster democratic institutions in Africa and Latin America. “We will insist that leaders who are elected democratically have an obligation to govern democratically,” she said. “We will work in partnership with developing nations to fight corruption, instill the rule of

law, and create a culture of transparency that will attract the trade and investment crucial to poverty reduction.”

The secretary listed fiscal year 2006 requests of \$734.5 million for the Andean Counter Drug Initiative; \$19.9 billion for core development assistance; \$3 billion for the Millennium Challenge Corporation, “which helps countries that govern justly, adopt sound economic policies and invest in the welfare of their people;” and \$2.4 billion for child survival and health assistance.

The administration is seeking a total of \$3.2 billion to fight HIV/AIDs and \$2.59 billion for food aid, famine relief and humanitarian assistance. Additional money was requested in the 2005 supplemental budget to pay for the U.S. relief effort for Indian Ocean tsunami victims and over \$1 billion for peacekeeping missions and humanitarian needs in several African countries and Haiti.

U.S. obligations to international organizations, such as the United Nations, are a \$1.2 billion budget item.

Rice also said U.S. partners in the global war on terror would receive \$5.8 billion for assistance in fiscal 2006 and \$750 million in 2005 if the budget requests are authorized.

Priorities within the Department of State, she said, include “the ability to deploy trained and experienced civilian personnel immediately to an unstable region,” increasing public diplomacy efforts, and providing security upgrades to U.S. embassies.

#### COMMERCE CHIEF PRESENTS U.S. PLAN AT EARTH OBSERVATION SUMMIT

Gutierrez says integrated observing system will change the “way we live”

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez led the U.S. delegation at the Global Earth Observation Summit February 16 in Brussels, Belgium, and presented the United States’ plan for an integrated U.S. Earth Observation system during the summit’s keynote speech.

The U.S. system would be part of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) for monitor-

ing the Earth. Gutierrez predicted that such an integrated observing system “will be one of those rare technologies that will fundamentally change the way we live, the way we make policy decisions, and the way we manage scarce and precious resources.”

He said the integrated system would transmit data that “will be invaluable to all of our nations. In addition to the all-important goal of reducing loss of life and property from disasters, this system would allow for more accurate forecasting to predict hurricanes and other disasters. It would help us to better protect and monitor our ocean resources, understand our climate, and guard our agricultural resources.”

“To put it simply, we would each have the pulse of the entire globe,” Gutierrez said.

The United States “is making the commitment to move earth observation to the next level to benefit this next generation. This is one of President Bush’s environmental priorities,” he said.

The intergovernmental ad hoc Group on Earth Observation (GEO) has been developing the framework of a 10-year GEOSS implementation plan, which it presented at the summit.

Speaking of the earthquake and tsunami that ravaged Indian Ocean nations in December 2004, Gutierrez said, “Two months ago, we saw that the forces of nature know no political boundaries. Likewise, I believe there are some actions that can only be accomplished by also transcending political borders. The integrated earth observation system is one of those.”

This third Earth Observation Summit, hosted by the European Commission, was held at the Palais d’Egmont in Brussels and brought together 60 countries and nearly 30 international organizations.

Gutierrez was making his first official international visit since being sworn in as secretary of commerce on February 7. In addition to participating in the summit, he met with European Union officials.

Prior to the trip, the secretary said he looked forward “to discussing the Bush Administration’s continued commitment to working with other nations to achieve common goals. The strength of the U.S. economy is closely tied to our success in fostering international partnerships and encouraging broad support for the sound fiscal and



monetary policies that create jobs at home and produce prosperity around the world.”

The U.S. delegation also included Retired Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere, and Charles Groat, director of the U.S. Geological Survey.

## STRENGTHENING PUBLIC-PRIVATE ACTION AGAINST LAND MINES

U.S.-sponsored meeting addresses public health threat

The U.S. Department of State February 15 released the following media note on a recent meeting in Washington on ways to improve public-private cooperation in protecting the world against persistent land mines:

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs invited non-governmental organizations, foreign officials and Federal agencies to a meeting February 9-11 in Washington to study new ways that the public and private sectors can cooperate to make the world safe from the devastating humanitarian impact of persistent landmines.

More than 80 representatives from civic associations, demining organizations, and humanitarian groups, including officials from Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq and the United States, analyzed the results of the public-private partnership program. The program reinforces humanitarian mine action, mine clearance, mine risk education and mine survivors' assistance. Additionally, the attendees charted new initiatives to better harmonize non-governmental organizations' mine action programs and to increase civil society support.

The workshop, organized by the Bureau's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement and facilitated by James Madison University's Mine Action Information Center, also familiarized participants with the humanitarian and security threats posed by illicitly trafficked small arms and light weapons to include man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS). As with persistent landmines, uncontrolled and illegally trafficked small arms and light weapons endanger public health and hinder development.

The results of the workshop and a calendar of evolving post-workshop initiatives will soon be posted at a special website hosted by the Mine Action Information Center at <http://maic.jmu.edu/conference/proceedings/partnership2005>.

The 56 participating organizations included: Adopt-A-Minefield; Afghan Technical Consultants; The Barrie School; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Center for International Rehabilitation; Chicago Coalition for Landmine Action; Children of Armenia Fund; Children's Surgical Center; Clear Path International; Cranfield University; Danish Church Aid; Demining Agency for Afghanistan; Embassy of Colombia; European Commission; Freedom Fields USA; Golden West Humanitarian Foundation; Grapes for Humanity; Handicap International; The HALO Trust; Help Handicap International; Humpty Dumpty Institute; Iraq National Mine Action Authority; Iraq Mine/UXO Clearance Organization (IMCO); Landmines Blow!; Landmine Survivors Network; Marshall Legacy Institute; Medical Care Development International; Mine Action Information Center; Mines Advisory Group (MAG); Mine Clearance Planning Agency (Afghanistan); One Sri Lanka Foundation; Organization of American States (OAS); Peace Trees Vietnam; People to People International; Polus Center for Social and Economic Development; Prestige Health Care Technologies; Prosthetics Outreach Foundation; RONCO Consulting Corporation; Roots of Peace; Rotary International Trade Education Foundation; Rotarians for Mine Action; Saybrook Productions; South Florida Landmine Action Group (SFLAG); Spirit of Soccer; Survey Action Center; United Nations Foundation; United Nations Mine Action Service; U.S. Agency for International Development Leahy War Victims Fund; U.S. Army Night Vision and Electronics Sensors Directorate; U.S. Department of Defense Humanitarian Mine Action Program; U.S. Department of Education National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research; Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped; Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation; Walter Reed Army Medical Center; and World Rehabilitation Fund.

**Plases Note:** Most texts and transcript mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage: [www.usmission.ch](http://www.usmission.ch)

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